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Japan

S&T Expenditures

The Japanese Government survey revealed that Japan's total R&D expenditure for JFY2011 (April 1, 2011-March 31, 2012) was $217 billion, an increase of 1.6% from the previous year and the first increase in four years. The rate of R&D investment as a percentage of GDP also increased to 3.67% from 3.56 in the previous year. The number of researchers as of March 31, 2011 rose 0.2% to a record 844,400. The research expenditure per researcher was $257,250, an increase of 1.4% from the previous year and the first increase in four years. The number of women researchers increased to a record 14% of the total. NSF Tokyo Office is preparing a report on these statistics.

Singapore

15 internationally-renowned scientists to inspire and mentor 300 young scientists

Young scientists from around the world will gather in Singapore this month for an opportunity to meet eminent figures from the world of science. About 300 PhD students and postdoctoral researchers will take part in the Global Young Scientists summit featuring talks by speakers such as Sydney Brenner, who won the Nobel Prize in physiology/medicine, and Nobel laureate Yang Chen Ning, who received the prize in physics. The summit will be held from Jan 20 to 25 on the National University of Singapore (NUS) campus.

The summit is modelled on the Lindau meetings, where young scientists meet and mingle with Nobel laureates. Those taking part will come from the United States, Europe, Singapore and other parts of Asia.

And after being given a glimpse of Singapore's research resources, some might be enticed to stay on in Singapore to work. At least, that is the hope of the National Research Foundation, which is organizing the inaugural Global Young Scientists Summit with other agencies and institutions.

"We are competing with very exciting places like South Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and India," said NRF chief executive Low Teck Seng. Shaffique Adam, a physicist at NUS and Yale-NUS College, said he is also on the lookout for young talent to recruit as postdoctoral researchers.

Professor Low said the summit could become an annual event depending on whether it proves a success. The summit will also feature a Singapore Challenge in which participants submit their proposals for sustainable development, including energy management and urban transportation. The winner, to be announced on Jan 25, will receive a US$100,000 (S$122,000) cash prize and a medallion.

http://www.nrf.gov.sg/nrf/uploadedFiles/20121203_GYSS%20Media%20Release%20%28FINAL%29.pdf

http://www.straitstimes.com/breaking-news/singapore/story/boot-camp-young-scientists-singapore-20130103

South Korea

Administration to create new science ministry

South Korea's President-elect Park Geun-hye will create a new ministry, the Ministry of Creative Science, in mid-January, 2013. Creating the new ministry was a core part of Park's presidential campaign pledges on reorganization. Under the proposal, the transition team, which will be launched soon, will discuss ways to downsize the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST), the Ministry of Knowledge and Economy (MKE), and the Ministry of Strategy and Finance (MOSF) to avoid overlapping functions. Under the current system, the MEST handles science and technology, the MKE deals with technology policies while the MOSF is in charge of long-term strategy for science. These functions will be incorporated into the newly-created Ministry of Creative Science.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/12/116_127591.html

R&D Project for graphene commercialization begins in 2013

The Ministry of Knowledge and Economy (MKE) will launch a long-term national R&D project beginning in April 2013 to advance South Korea in the global graphene market. The project is a part of the MKE's Future Flagship Program aiming to take the lead in the advanced materials industry by excelling in the graphene market. Via this project, 33 companies will become global players, 42 commercial-scale technologies will be developed and 12 world-class projects will begin. The project will continue for six years.

http://english.etnews.com/policy/2693677_1302.html